THE PROPER ETERNITY OF THE DIVINE DECREES, AND OF THE MEDIATORIAL OFFICE, OF JESUS CHRIST:

ASSERTED and PROVED,

In a Diſcourſe delivered, in a Monthly-Exerciſe of Prayer with a Sermon, on the 19th of *September*, 1754.

By JOHN BRINE.

Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the *Miniſters* and others.

LONDON:

Printed and Sold by JOHN WARD, againſt the *Royal Exchange*; GEORGE KEITH, in *Grace-Church-Street*; and JOHN EYNON, at a Print Shop, on the *North Side* of the *Royal Exchange*. M.DCC.LIV.

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PREFACE.

IN composing this Diſcourſe, I had no Thoughts of its Appearance in the World. But as the Publication of it, was deſired, by ſuch unto whom I pay no ſmall Deference, I have ventured to expoſe it to public View, although, I am apprehenſive, that it may be diſpleaſing unto ſome; becauſe I have herein, taken the Liberty to animadvert upon an Abſurdity advanced, by a learned *Author, concerning the divine Decrees*; viz. That they are not *properly* Eternal; but *later* than the Exiſtence of God, and had *Beginning*. *We all profeſs to believe that we are fallible, and may err, and yet, it is very common with Men, to treat thoſe with Diſdain, who think that they are wrong in any Point, and attempt to rectify their Miſtakes. Their Friends alſo, ſometimes, very much ill-reſent ſuch Freedom. And, this is one of the numerous Ways wherein the Pride and Naughtineſs of the Heart diſcovers itſelf. However, I am not unprepared for bearing Cenſure, in the Defence of that, which*

appears to me, is Divine Truth. I am only ſorry that it hath not a better Advocate, when I am engaged in its Vindication. If what is preſented to the Reader, ſhall be of the leaſt Service, either in guarding him againſt, or convincing him of the miſtaken Conceptions about the Decrees of God, the Perſon of Chriſt, and of his Conſtitution unto the mediatorial Office, ſo far my Ends will be anſwered. And, I am not altogether without Hope, that this ſhort Diſcourſe, may in ſome Meaſure, be conducive unto thoſe Ends, under the divine Bleſſing: Unto which I would ſolemnly recommend it.

PROV. viii. 22, 23.

The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his Way, before his Works of old. I was ſet up, from Everlaſting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was.

THESE are the Words of Wiſdom, which ſpeaks throughout the Chapter: Different Apprehenſions have been entertained concerning this divine Speaker, *viz.* What, or who is meant by Wiſdom. I think there are clear Reaſons to conclude, that by Wiſdom, a Perſon, or intelligent Agent is intended: For, Wiſdom all along ſpeaks under perſonal Characters, and various perſonal Acts are attributed unto this Speaker. As ſearching, or finding out. *I Wiſdom dwell with Prudence, and find out Knowledge of witty Inventions.* Alſo Acts of Love and Affection: *I love them that love me.* And acts of Joy and Delight: *Then was I by him, as one brought up with him, I was daily his Delight, rejoycing always before him: Rejoycing in the habitable Parts of his Earth, and my Delights were with the Sons of Men.* All which are perſonal Acts, and, therefore, this divine Speaker, is a Perſon, or an underſtanding

Agent; and the Things which are predicated of this Speaker, are ſo *grand* and *ſublime*, that they cannot be applicable to any other Perſon than Chriſt, who is the *Wiſdom*, as well as the *Power of God*.

Underſtanding the Words of our bleſſed Redeemer, without commenting upon what precedes, I ſhall immediately proceed to the Explication of them.

And it will be proper to ſhew, what is deſigned by the Way of the Lord; what the Beginning of his way imports; what is implied in the Act of poſſeſſing Chriſt; what Works of God are intended, before which he poſſeſſed our Saviour, and why they are ſaid to be of old; what the ſetting up of Wiſdom deſigns: when this was done, *from Everlaſting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was.*

I. I would ſhew what is deſigned by the Way of the Lord. The Way of God ſometimes intends his wiſe and holy Diſpenſations towards the World, and towards his Church in Providence, which are the Accompliſhment of his Decrees concerning both, with reſpect unto their temporal Eſtate. This is a Senſe wherein it is frequently to be underſtood: And his Way is to be taken for his gracious Purpoſes and Counſels, which were formed in his infinite and eternal Mind, concerning Chriſt, and his Church. I apprehend this Senſe is deſigned by it in theſe Words: *For my Thoughts are not your Thoughts, neither are your Ways my Ways ſaith the Lord. For as the Heavens are higher than*

the

*the Earth, so are my Ways higher than your Ways, and my Thoughts than your Thoughts.**

It is of pardoning Grace and Mercy, that the Lord there speaks: *For he will abundantly pardon.* We are too apt to limit the *Holy One of Israel*, in his Acts of pardoning Kindness and Mercy. And it is his Intention, in these Words, to assure us, that his Purposes of Grace, Mercy, and Pardon, infinitely Exceeds those Conceptions which we are apt to entertain thereof. I apprehend, that in this Sense, the divine Way is to be understood, in the Text: Or, that God's Thoughts and Purposes of Love, and Grace concerning Christ and his Members are meant by his Way. Further I am to shew,

II. What the Beginning of his Way imports. If we understand it of Duration; That must either commence, or not commence, have Limit, or not have Limit. The Term beginning is put for Duration, which had not Commencement, in these Words; *God hath from the Beginning chosen you to Salvation, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit, and the Belief of the Truth.* This divine Act of Election was eternal: *According as he hath chosen us in him, before the Foundation of the World.* From the Beginning, and before the Foundation of the World mean the same. And, there never was an Instant wherein the Church was not the Object of a gracious Choice unto Salvation, or the Enjoyment of eternal Life.

* Isa. lv. 8, 9.

A *learned* Writer hath been pleaſed to diſtinguiſh upon Eternity, *a Parte ante*, or that Duration, which was before the Exiſtence of the World, or Things created, and ſpeaks of a *firſt*, and *an after Date* therein. The *firſt Date* reſpects, he ſays, *God's Exiſtence*, which was eternal, and had no Beginning: The *after Date* refers unto his Decrees, or Acts within himſelf relating unto Chriſt and the Church, which he affirms had *Beginning*: He ſums up what he had before more largely expreſſed, and pleaded for, in this Aſſertion, *viz. God himſelf was before the Conceptions and Thoughts which he entertained of his Works: Before, before in Order of Nature; but how long before, the Thing neither ſpeaks nor the Word declares* *. Let us preſs this Grape a little, that we may be able to form a Judgment of the Nature of its Juice. The plain Import of this Aſſertion is, God was before he had infinite Thought and Conſciouſneſs; but how long before, is impoſſible to be known, becauſe neither the Thing ſpeaks, nor the Word declares it. This is a *very unſafe, a very offenſive, and a moſt abſurd Way of ſpeaking*. If God ever was without infinite Thought and Conſciouſneſs, he was not, he then could not be God. For, a Being without Thought and Conſciouſneſs can't be God. To be quite free with you upon this Subject. The Aſſertion is ſo *extremely abſurd, that it excites my Aſtoniſhment*. The Divine Decrees are of the ſame Date with the Exiſtence of God. His Being is not of one Date, and his Purpoſes of another, a later Date.

* Mr. *Huſſey*, The Glory of Chriſt unveil'd, p. 85, 86.

Date. Beſides, to ſuppoſe, that there was an *everlaſting*, or a Duration, before the Exiſtence of a Creature, that really had a Beginning, or Commencement, is to imagine, that there was a Duration, which was neither *eternal*, nor *temporary*; but *ſomething between both*, which is an highly *abſurd* Imagination. Duration is, either immeaſurable and without any Limit: Or, it is meaſurable and hath a Limit. If Duration paſt is immeaſurable, it is eternal, and could not have any Beginning. If it is meaſurable, it is not eternal, but temporary, and muſt have had Commencement. *There can be no Medium between Eternity and Time.* A Duration which begins, is meaſurable and limited, whether it is meaſured and divided into the Parts whereof it conſiſts, or not, by the Motion of Body, or otherwiſe. Meaſurable and limited it is, and there muſt be ſome *Inſtant* at which we muſt neceſſarily ſtop, when we contemplate a paſt Duration, which had Beginning. If, therefore, the Divine Decrees are *later* than the Exiſtence of God, or had Beginning, they muſt, as to Duration, have been infinitely ſhort of the Exiſtence of God. So that, according to the Doctrine contained in this *moſt abſurd* Aſſertion, there muſt have been an infinite Duration, wherein, God was without any Conceptions and Thoughts of his Works: That is to ſay, without infinite Thought and Conſciouſneſs; and, therefore, for an infinite Duration, he was not God. For, if his Conceptions and Thoughts really had

had Beginning, they must begin after Himself had existed, in a Duration infinite: Because such a Duration must have been before a measurable Duration could begin; and, consequently, though God, in his Existence is eternal, his Love to Christ, and the Church, and his Decrees about them, are not eternal, but only temporary. Which is no more true, than it is, that the Almighty Creator, once, was not God.

A certain Writer pours Contempt upon some, whose Works have praised, and will long praise them, in the Gates of the Church, that have endeavoured, to prove Christ's eternal Existence, or proper Deity from this Place. His contemptuous Words concerning them, are these: *I wonder not, that Arianism prevails as it doth, amongst us, at this Day, when such poor, blind, ignorant Wretches, undertake to defend the Doctrine of the Redeemer's Godhead, for sure I am, that going to the viiith of the Proverbs to prove it, is for ever to give up the Cause into the Hands of the Arians.** This contemptuous Language the Author prevailed with himself to use, concerning some worthy Persons, as any perhaps, the Church of God was blessed with in the former Century.

His great Confidence and Contempt will not deter me from asserting, that in this *Chapter*, clear Proof is given, in Abundance, and above all Exception, unto the important Doctrine of the eternal Existence, and proper Deity of our precious

* Mr. *Stockell*. The Redeemer's Glory unveiled, p. 36.

precious Redeemer. I ſhall proceed ſo far, as to ſay, that, if that Doctrine is not capable of Proof, from this Context; Proof of it cannot be brought from any Part whatever, of ſacred Writ. The Terms and Phraſes, uſed therein, expreſſing the Eternity of his Exiſtence, are ſo *full, ſtrong,* and *explicite,* that none more ſo can be produced. But this Writer was led into a Miſtake, by what the *learned* Author, I before referred unto, had advanced, concerning the Import of the Term everlaſting, as it is uſed, in relation to God's Decrees, and Acts within himſelf, as ſome other Perſons have alſo been, which is not a little to be lamented.

Upon the Whole, if Beginning is underſtood of Duration, Eternity muſt be intended: Or that immeaſurable Duration, which was before the Creation of the World, and had no Commencement. But it may be obſerved, that in the Original, it is not, in the Beginning, as we tranſlate; but *the Lord poſſeſſed me, the Beginning of his Way.** And the *original* Word ſignifies the Firſt, or Chief. By which two Things are ſuggeſted.

1. That Chriſt is the Firſt and Chief, in the Decrees of God, as they are all calculated for his Glory, above Angels and Men. The ſupreme End of God in his Purpoſes and Operations, is the Glory of his own infinite Perfections, Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs, &c. For he made, and decreed to make all Things

for

* ראשית לו Without the Prefix ב.

for himself. His next, ſubordinate End, which he eternally had in View, was the Glory of Chriſt, in the Character of Mediator, as an Effect of his infinite Love unto his Perſon. Hence the Apoſtle ſpeaking of Chriſt in his mediatorial Capacity, or of his Perſon, as conſtituted of the divine and human Natures, ſays: *All Things were created by him and for him.* They were made by him, as an efficient Cauſe, and they were alſo made for him, as a final Cauſe.

Again, 2. When it is ſaid, that Chriſt is the Firſt, or Chief of God's Ways, it implies, that there is a more glorious Diſplay of his Perfections in him, than in any of, or all his other Works taken together. All Divine Works are excellent and worthy of their infinitely good and great Author. The Works of Creation point out unto us the infinite Wiſdom, unlimited Power, and Benevolence of the Creator. *For the inviſible Things of him, from the Creation of the World, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* But, there is a far more illuſtrious and ſuperior Diſplay of the Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Holineſs, Truth, and Juſtice of God, in the Conſtitution of the Perſon of Chriſt, and in the *amazing* Deſigns, which are thereby accompliſhed. And, therefore, with great Propriety, he may be ſaid, as Mediator, to be the Chief of his Ways. I proceed to ſhew,

III. What

III. What is implied in the Act of poſſeſſing Chriſt. The *original* Word * ſignifies to have or poſſeſs by Price, or by Labour, and ſometimes by Birth. In this Senſe *Eve* uſes it. When ſhe had conceived and bore *Cain*, ſhe ſaid: *I have gotten* (the ſame Word) *a Man from the Lord.* In this Senſe it may be underſtood here, for there is not that wanting in the Context, which gives Countenance unto it. Wiſdom, or Chriſt, ſays of himſelf, *Before the Mountains were ſettled, before the Hills was I brought forth.* The latter Writer, unto whom I before referred, on the Subject of the Filiation of Chriſt, hath theſe remarkable Words: *I am poſitive, that Chriſt as the eternal God* (i. e. as a Divine Perſon) *was never begotten, ſince it is impoſſible for me to conceive the begetter and the begotten to be of equal Date.*†

Why is he ſo confident that Chriſt, as a Divine Perſon, was never begotten? He was ſo, becauſe he was not able to conceive how he could be of the ſame Date with him, by whom he was begotten. Shall we *poor Worms*, whoſe Underſtandings are finite and limited, take upon us, boldly to pronounce, that, that cannot be in Deity, which we are unable to form adequate Ideas of, or explain how it is? We muſt forget our own Nature, and the Nature of God alſo, if we do. We muſt forget our own Nature, that it is limited and finite, and for

* קנה † Mr. *Stockell*, ibid. p. 41.

that Reaſon, incapable of comprehending that which is infinite. And, we muſt forget the Nature of God, *viz.* that it is infinite, and therefore, unto us incomprehenſible. That, therefore, may be in Deity, which we are ſure cannot be in finite and limited Beings. And, that which involves a Contradiction, in Beings finite and limited, may not, in that Being, which is infinite. For Inſtance, in the human Nature, it implies a manifeſt Contradiction to conceive, that he who is begotten, is of the ſame Date with him that begot him. But, it by no Means follows, that it is a Contradiction to conceive, that a Divine Perſon, who is begotten, is of the ſame Date with the Divine Begetter. This Writer, notwithſtanding his Confidence in this Matter, might have been aſked, as puzzling Queſtions concerning Eternity, as any he could propoſe relating unto this *myſterious* Subject. But, I ſuppoſe, he would ſcarcely have denied, that there is a Duration, which had not Beginning, and which will never end, though he might have found it impoſſible for him to reſolve ſome difficult Queſtions concerning it.

It is beyond Contradiction, that Chriſt is the Son of God. He is his Son, therefore, either in a *proper* Senſe, or only in an *improper* and *metaphorical* one. That he is the Son of God, in a proper Senſe, may be concluded from his aſſerting, that God was his own Father: *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work:* The *Jews* inferred, and very rightly, from this Aſſertion,

Aſſertion, and not from his affirming himſelf to be the *Meſſiah*, that he *made himſelf equal with God. Therefore, the* Jews *ſought the more to kill him, not only becauſe he had broken the Sabbath, but ſaid alſo, that God was his (*not *own, or proper) Father, making himſelf equal with God.* * He is ſo a Son, as to be of the ſame Nature with God, whoſe Son he is. For which Reaſon, he is called God's own, or *proper* Son. *God ſpared not his own*, or proper *Son.* God can't be his *proper* Father, if he begat him not; nor can he be God's *proper* Son, unleſs he was begotten of him. But he is God's *begotten*, and his *only begotten Son: God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.*

Some have thought, and ſome do think, that Chriſt is called the Son of God, becauſe he is inveſted with Office. But, that is to confound the very different Characters, of a Son and a Servant, and it neceſſarily makes them the ſame. As inveſted with the Office of Mediator, he is God's Servant: *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold.* Now if it is true, that he is God's Son, as inveſted with the mediatorial Office, he is no otherwiſe a Son, than as he is a Servant, and theſe very different Characters, of Son and Servant, can contain and convey no different, but in all Reſpects, the ſame Idea, which there is no Reaſon to think. Beſides, Chriſt was a Son antecedent unto his Inveſtiture with the mediatorial Office,

* John v. 17, 18.

which he could not poſſibly be, if his being in that Office was the *formal Reaſon*, or Cauſe of his Sonſhip. That he was a Son before his Inveſtiture with Office, is, I think, abundantly clear from theſe Words of the inſpired Writer: *For the Law maketh Men High Prieſts which have Infirmity; but the Word of the Oath, which was ſince the Law, maketh the Son, who is conſecrated for evermore.* If Chriſt bears the Character of Son, on account of his being the High Prieſt, or Mediator of the Church, he could not be a Son, before his Inveſtiture with that Office; but it is moſt clear that he was: *For the Word of the Oath, which was ſince the Law, maketh the Son,* or conſtituteth *the Son.* What doth it make or conſtitute him? It made or conſtituted him High Prieſt, or Mediator: And, therefore, he was a Son before he was made High Prieſt, or Mediator. This is ſo *clear and illuſtrious* a Teſtimony unto the Truth of the Sonſhip of Chriſt, as a Divine Perſon, that I am perſuaded, it will be impoſſible for the Wit of Man, by any *Arts*, or *Shifts*, to cloud it, and enervate its Force. Farther, Chriſt as a Son, was not under Obligation to obey and ſuffer. This is clearly ſuggeſted in theſe Words: *Though he were a Son, yet learned he Obedience by the Things that he ſuffered.* The Opinion of his being a Son, as inveſted with Office, muſt compel us to conclude this to be the Senſe of thoſe Words: Though he was a Son, and as ſuch under Obligation to obey and ſuffer, yet learned

learned he Obedience, by the Things that he ſuffered. But who can think this to be the Import of the Divine Writer? Surely none. As Mediator, he was under Obligation to obey and ſuffer: As a Son, he was not, and therefore, his mediatorial Office is not intended by his Sonſhip; but his filial Relation unto God, as a Divine Perſon.

Again, the Father poſſeſſed him of all thoſe Treaſures of Grace and Glory, which he intended the Church ſhould receive here, and enjoy hereafter. And, there is that in the Context, which favours this Senſe alſo: *That I may cauſe them that love me to inherit Subſtance, and I will fill their Treaſures.* Chriſt is capable of making good this Promiſe: For, *it hath pleaſed the Father that in him all Fulneſs ſhould dwell. He bleſſed us with all ſpiritual Bleſſings in heavenly Places in Chriſt.* And that Grace, according unto which we are ſaved and called, was given us in Chriſt; *Who hath ſaved us and called us, with an holy Calling, not according to our Works; but according to his own Purpoſe and Grace which was given us in Chriſt before the World began.* All thoſe precious Benefits, which the Church of God partakes of, in this World, and all that Bliſs and Glory, which ſhe will poſſeſs in the heavenly State, were depoſited, and laid up for her in the Hands of her ever-bleſſed and glorious Head. In whoſe Keeping they are eternally ſecure. Farther,

IV. God

IV. God poſſeſſed Chriſt *before his Works of old.*

1. The Works which are intended, are the Works of Creation; of this I think there can be no Doubt: Becauſe Wiſdom, immediately after the Text, proceeds to give an elegant Deſcription of the Creation: *When there were no Depths, I was brought forth: When there were no Fountains abounding with Water: Before the Mountains were ſettled, before the Hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the Earth, nor the Fields, nor the higheſt Part of the Duſt of the World. When he prepared the Heavens, I was there: When he ſet a Compaſs upon the Face of the Depth. When he eſtabliſhed the Clouds above: When he ſtrengthened the Fountains of the Deep: When he gave to the Sea his Decree, that the Waters ſhould not paſs his Commandment: When he appointed the Foundations of the Earth.* Theſe are the wonderful Works deſigned; wherein Divine Wiſdom and Power are manifeſted. Creation is proper to God. Omnipotence only could give Exiſtence unto Body, out of non-exiſting Matter: Which it did. For, *Things which are ſeen, were not made of Things which do appear.* And infinite Wiſdom and Power alone could form the beautiful Fabrick of the Univerſe, out of that *rude Maſs* of Matter, unto which Exiſtence was firſt given: *The Earth was without Form, and void: And Darkneſs was upon the Face of the Deep.* Creation therefore, is a Work Divine, and peculiar to God. And he challenges it, as

as his own. *Lift up your Eyes on high, and behold who hath created theſe Things, that bringeth out their Hoſt by Number; he calleth them all by their Names, by the Greatneſs of his Might, for that he is ſtrong in Power, not one faileth* *.

2. Theſe Works were wrought *of old*. Many Ages had then run out ſince the Creation of the World, and, therefore, they are ſaid to be of old. And as Things created invariably keep thoſe Laws, thro' all the ſucceſſive Ages of Time, unto which they were ſubjected, in their Creation, it is an Evidence, that they were formed by infinite Wiſdom, and are preſerved and upheld in that beautiful Order, wherein they were at firſt fixed by immenſe Power. And,

3. Chriſt was poſſeſſed of the Father before a creating Act was put forth: Or before Being was given to any Creature, and, conſequently, in Eternity: Or in that infinite, immeaſurable Duration, which was before Time commenced. The Beginning of God's Way, therefore, cannot poſſibly mean a finite and limited Duration. If proper Eternity is not expreſſed by theſe Phraſes, it will be impoſſible to produce any from Scripture, which expreſs it. But the next general thing in the Text demands my Attention.

V. Chriſt was ſet up: *I was ſet up.* The original Word, (נסך) ſignifies *pouring forth*, or *anointing*, and as Oil was poured forth upon a Perſon

* Iſa. xl. 26

Perſon who was inveſted with Office: Or, as a Perſon was anointed with Oil, when appointed unto Office; Chriſt's Appointment unto and Inveſtiture with the mediatoral Office, is intended by this Phraſe. The latter Writer, ſome of whoſe Words I took notice of before, entertaining the Notion of the Pre-exiſtence of the Soul of Chriſt, labours to prove it from this Place. He objects unto the Application of the Phraſe to Chriſt, as a divine Perſon, in this very *nonſenſical* Manner. *Now this cannot have the leaſt Relation to his Godhead, becauſe we cannot ſay that was poured out* *. No, nor can we ſay, that his Soul was poured out, when he was anointed unto Office. The Perſon anointed to Office is not poured out, but Oil is poured forth upon him, or he is anointed therewith. He adds: *Theſe Words may likewiſe denote his Unction; and ſo it may be read,* I was anointed from Everlaſting. *In this Senſe it cannot be applied to his Divinity* †. The Phraſe being underſtood in its true Senſe, it will quickly appear, that it may be very well applied to the Perſon of Chriſt, as deſigned unto a Union with the human Nature. For, it intends Deſignation to Office. And the divine Perſon of Chriſt, as he was to become incarnate, was inveſted with the mediatorial Office: Which was done in the everlaſting Covenant, that was entered into by the Divine Perſons.

Of that Covenant, and the Parties therein contracting, he ſpeaks thus: *I am not writing about*

* Redeemer's Glory, *&c.* p. 40. † *Ibid.*

about the Counſels and Purpoſes of God in himſelf, but of his covenanting and contracting with a Perſon to fulfil and execute theſe Counſels and Purpoſes, and of the Perſon's Willingneſs, that was covenanted and contracted with to undertake ſuch a Work.—I freely confeſs, that the Platform of Salvation was laid in the eternal Mind, and that the whole Scheme of our Happineſs was drawn in Eternity, infinitely beyond all Date; but yet the Contract between the Father and Chriſt was not ſo, unleſs the Man Chriſt be infinitely Eternal, (it is abſurd to think that Eternity is finite) *or elſe an infinite Being muſt contract with himſelf* *. This is the Sum of what this *goodly* Author, had to object to the Eternity of the Covenant of Grace, and unto its being an Agreement between the divine Perſons. The Whole of this Diſcourſe will be removed out of the Way without the leaſt Difficulty.

For, tho' the divine Being did not contract with itſelf, the divine Perſons, exiſting diſtinctly in the divine Eſſence, entered into Covenant with each other.

As the eternal *Three*, Father, Son, and Spirit, are perſonally diſtinct, tho' *eſſentially* one, they *each* act *diſtinctly*, in the divine Eſſence: Or the divine Wiſdom and Will, which are eſſentially the ſame, act *diſtinctly* in each divine Perſon, by reaſon of their *diſtinct* perſonal Subſiſtence in the divine Nature.

Thus the divine Wiſdom and Will, acting *diſtinctly* in the *diſtinct* Perſon of the Father, deſigned

* Redeemer's Glory, &c. p. 34.

deſigned and reſolved upon the Incarnation of the Son, and his accompliſhing our Redemption, in our Nature, as perſonally united unto himſelf, by doing and ſuffering all that Law and Juſtice required, unto that important End. And this was the Father's Propoſal unto the Son, to undertake that great and arduous Work. And thus alſo,

The divine Wiſdom and Will, acting *diſtinctly* in the Perſon of the Son, who ſubſiſts *diſtinctly* from the Father in the divine Eſſence, approved of this Deſign, or concurred with the Father therein; which Approbation and Concurrence, was the Son's Engagement to fulfil the Will and Counſel of the Father, relating unto that wonderful Affair, and it brought him under an Obligation, to do and ſuffer in our Nature, when taken into perſonal Union with himſelf, the Whole of what Law and Juſtice required, in order to our Salvation.

Again, the divine Wiſdom and Will acting *diſtinctly* in the ever-bleſſed Spirit, who is a Perſon *diſtinct* from the Father and the Son, he approved of the gracious Deſign, of the Salvation of the Elect: And, as the divine Wiſdom and Will, in the Perſon of the Father and the Perſon of the Son, willed that he ſhould glorify Chriſt, and ſanctify the Church; he agreed, and conſented unto the Will of the Father, and the Will of the Son. Thus he took upon himſelf the Work and Office of glorifying Chriſt, and ſanctifying the Church, which is that Part that he bears in the Oeconomy of our Salvation.

Salvation. And, therefore, as the Son became obliged unto the Father, as he was to be incarnate, to redeem his People and Members: So the holy Spirit became obliged unto both the Father and the Son to glorify Chriſt and ſanctify the Church.

And, I humbly apprehend, that it is with *eſpecial* Relation unto this, that the Holy Spirit is ſo frequently ſtiled the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of his Son, or of Chriſt; That for this Reaſon alſo, he is ſaid to be ſent both by the Father and the Son. By his Engagement he came under Obligation, both unto the Father and the Son, to perform his Part, in the Buſineſs of our Salvation. And, this is the Foundation of his Miſſion by the Father, and of his Miſſion by the Son. Right ariſes from hence, unto both to ſend him: And, accordingly, he is ſent by both. He comes at the Pleaſure of the Father: *Whom the Father will ſend in my Name. God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts.* He likewiſe comes at the Will of the Son: *If I depart I will ſend him unto you*, ſays Chriſt, concerning the holy Spirit, under the Character of *Comforter*.

Theſe *diſtinct* and *mutual* Actings of the divine Perſons, between themſelves, are the Covenant of Grace, wherein the Method of our Salvation was fixed, and that gracious Deſign effectually ſecured.

And, therefore, this Author hath only diſcovered his *Weakneſs*, in ſaying, that the *Contract between the Father and Chriſt was not infi-*

nitely beyond all Date, unleſs the Man Chriſt be infinitely Eternal, (as he *nonſenſically* ſpeaks, for there is no *finite Eternity*) *or elſe an infinite Being muſt contract with himſelf* *. The infinite, diſtinct Perſons, in Deity, contracted, or entered into mutual Engagements between themſelves, in this federal Tranſaction. This was not the Contract of the divine Nature with itſelf; but it was the Contract of the divine Father, the eternal Son, and the bleſſed Spirit, who are *perſonally diſtinct*, tho' *eſſentially one*. Nor, can the *diſtinct* Actings of the divine Wiſdom and Will, which are *eſſentially* the ſame, be denied, without the Denial of the *diſtinct* Perſonality of the Father, Son and Spirit. If they are *diſtinct* Perſons, without all queſtion they act *diſtinctly*: Or the divine Wiſdom and Will act *diſtinctly*, in each of the eternal *Three*, Father, Son, and the holy Spirit.

Beſides, to imagine, with this Author, that the human Soul of Chriſt exiſted when the Covenant of Grace was entered into, and that it was a contracting Party, in that Covenant, abſolutely deſtroys the Eternity of it, which he is obliged to grant. Hence it undeniably follows, that *once* there was no Covenant of Grace: *Once* Chriſt was not the Mediator and Head of the Church. It was in that Covenant, that he

* Upon this Occaſion, I cannot forbear to ſay, it is to be wiſhed, that ſome Perſons could prevail with themſelves to reſt ſatisfied, without becoming Authors; eſpecially on *ſublime Subjects*, which they are not qualified to write about, and, therefore, they expoſe themſelves, and do much Prejudice to Truth, by their Publications on ſuch Subjects.

was

was conſtituted ſuch: If therefore, that Covenant *once* was not, it muſt be allowed that *once* Chriſt was not the Mediator and Head of the Elect of God: And, conſequently, *once, his Delights were not with the Sons of Men.* This is that *Bleſſed Divinity*, which this Writer recommends unto the Embracement of Chriſtians: But it ought to be eternally abhorred, as that which ſaps the very Foundation of all their Faith and Hope.

Farther, the Notion of the Pre-exiſtence of the Soul of Chriſt, or of its exiſting before the Creation of the World, is repugnant to Scripture. That Opinion is as certainly falſe, as it is true, that *in the Beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth.* If there was before Creation a limited Duration, that Duration muſt have had Commencement, and was meaſurable, tho' not meaſured and divided into its Parts, by any regular Motion of Body, as I have before obſerved. And, that *Inſtant*, at which we muſt neceſſarily ſtop, in our Conceptions concerning it, *was the Beginning*, and not that *Inſtant*, wherein God's Act of Creation was put forth. And, therefore, if this Notion is true, what *Moſes* affirms muſt be falſe, and God did not in the Beginning create the Heavens and the Earth, but after the Beginning; and how long after, it ſeems, is not knowable, perhaps Millions of Ages. Into ſuch Abſurdities will ſome Men run, in order to ſupport their *Miſ-conceptions* of Things, or a *darling* Opinion, which they have happened to embrace.

Once

Once more, for I have not yet done with this *vain* Conceit. To ſuppoſe, as this Writer does, that the Soul of Chriſt was a contracting Party in the Covenant of Grace, and not his divine Perſon, is to detract from his Glory as a divine Perſon, and is advancing his human Soul unto ſuch Dignity, as is by no Means its Due. May the good Lord eternally preſerve me, from leſſening the Glory of a precious Jeſus, in his human Nature, which ought ever to be dear to my Soul! I humbly hope, that I ſhall never expreſs any thing, detracting from his Honour, in his human Nature. My Heart can't poſſibly bear the *killing* Thought: And, yet, with *Intrepidity* I ſay, that it was a Glory *peculiar* to Chriſt, in his divine Perſon, to contract with the other divine Perſons, the Father and the Holy Spirit, and that it was an Honour infinitely too great for the human Soul of Chriſt, to become a contracting Party in the Covenant of Grace. The Parties contracting were *equal*, as it was *condecent and fit*, that ſo they ſhould be.

Indeed, the Will of Chriſt as Man, upon his ſubſiſting, in his human Nature, freely and fully conſented, unto all the Articles, agreed on in the Covenant, relating unto both his Obedience and Sufferings: But it was his Engagement, as a divine Perſon, which brought his human Nature under Obligation to obey and ſuffer, as it hath its Subſiſtence therein. And it was fit, that the infinitely ſuperior conſtituent Part of Chriſt, in his complex Character, ſhould undertake for his inferior conſtituent Part, as Mediator. So that it was not neceſ-

neceſſary, that his human Nature ſhould ſubſiſt, in either part of it, his Soul no more than his Body, at his undertaking the Work of Redemption, in the Covenant of Grace.

In the ſetting up of Chriſt, or his Deſignation unto the mediatorial Office, various Particulars may be obſerved. As,

1. The divine Father purpoſed and propoſed to him, that in *the Fulneſs of Time* he ſhould aſſume our Nature, into Union with himſelf. The divine Wiſdom and Will, acting diſtinctly in the Perſon of the Father, as is above explained, moved this to him. This was *a Fore-ordination* of him to become Man, *before the Foundation of the World.*

2. Chriſt conſented unto this Deſign, and Propoſal of the Father: Or the divine Wiſdom and Will, acting *diſtinctly* in the Perſon of the Son, as is before expreſſed, he approved of this Deſign and Propoſal of the Father, and the Concurrence of the divine Will, in his Perſon, was his Engagement, to take our Nature into a perſonal Union with himſelf, at the Time appointed. His Language in this Tranſaction was: *Lo I come.* Hence,

3. Tho' the human Nature of Chriſt did not then ſubſiſt, he was conſidered, as God-Man, by the divine Perſons. Not that the divine Underſtanding, in either of the divine Perſons, accounted him to have Subſiſtence then, as Man; for that he had not; and, therefore, it was not poſſible, that the divine Underſtanding could conceive him to be then exiſtent, in

his human Nature; but he was had in Repute, by the divine Perſons, as God-Man, by reaſon of his certain future Incarnation, which was then reſolved upon, between themſelves. And in this Character, the Covenant of Grace was made with him. I would obſerve,

4. The Work aſſigned unto him, as incarnate; or what was required of him, as his Perſon is conſtituted of the divine and human Natures, in order to the Salvation of his Body, the Church. And,

(1) It was required of him to come under the Command of the Covenant of Works. That Covenant, without a *ſpecial* Appointment, could have had no Concern with, or Power over him, either in its Precepts, or Threatnings, not only becauſe he was not repreſented by *Adam*, with whom that Covenant was made, nor a natural Deſcendant of his: But alſo, becauſe his human Nature, as united unto his divine Perſon, is raiſed above the State and Condition of a mere Creature: And, therefore, it was a gracious Act of Condeſcenſion, in his divine Perſon, to conſent, that, that conſtituent Part of himſelf, as Mediator, ſhould come under the Obligation of the Covenant of Works: *Being found in Faſhion as a Man, he humbled himſelf, in becoming obedient unto Death.* Again,

(2) Another Thing required of him, was to ſuffer and die for his People, to make Atonement for their Sins: *When thou ſhalt make his Soul an Offering for Sin; he ſhall ſee his Seed.* This Article his divine Perſon alſo agreed unto.

And

And the Conſent of his divine Will brought his human Nature, under Obligation to ſubmit to Death? *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe Things?* It was an Act of infinite Compaſſion in Chriſt to poor Sinners, to conſent, to give up his human Nature, to the moſt dolorous Sufferings, and unto the moſt Ignominious, and alſo an accurſed Death, to redeem them from juſtly deſerved Deſtruction.

(5) The human Nature of Chriſt being united unto his divine Perſon, theſe two Things follow upon it.

[1] As Man he was at the Diſpoſal of his divine Will. As God, or a divine Perſon, he had abſolute Power over his human Nature, which was a conſtituent Part of himſelf, as Mediator, and, therefore, he had full and proper Right, to covenant and agree, that his human Nature ſhould both obey and die, in Obedience unto the Will of the Father. For, that Nature was his *own* in a *peculiar* Senſe, and it was fit, that it ſhould be abſolutely at the Diſpoſal of his divine Will. His Aſſumption of it into Union with himſelf was with a View, that it might ſo be. And our bleſſed Lord clearly expreſſes the Right of his divine Perſon to diſpoſe of his human Nature, according unto his own abſolute Pleaſure, in theſe Words: *No man taketh my Life from me; I lay it down of myſelf: I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again. This Commandment have I received of my Father.* The Glory of Chriſt as Man is unequalled, in Conſequence, of his perſonal

Union with the eternal Son of God: But this Union is so far from raising his human Nature, above an absolute Subjection unto his divine Will, that it necessarily infers it: Or the absolute Subjection of his human Will, unto his divine Will, necessarily follows upon it. His Engagement, therefore, as a divine Person, in the everlasting Covenant, brought an Obligation upon him, as Man, to do and suffer all, that was included in that federal Engagement of his, tho' his human Nature was not then existent.

[2] When the blessed Jesus had Subsistence as Man, his human Will, which is absolutely distinct from his Will, as God, was wholly under the Direction and Influence of his divine Will. And it was fit, that it should so be, for it would have been the highest Incongruity, if the human Will of Christ had not been under the determining Influence of the Will of his divine Person. Hence it was impossible, that the Will of Christ, as Man, should in any Instance, or at any Time, clash with his divine Will. And it is hence also, that the holy moral Operations of the human Nature of Christ, are to be esteemed the Acts of his Person, as Mediator, and that they become infinitely *meritorious*: Because they are the Acts of his Person, who is God as well as Man, tho' the human Nature only, is the immediate Subject from which they spring; therefore, infinite Merit attends them.

5. The Father gave the Elect to Christ, *as his Jewels*, or his own *peculiar* People. *Thine*

they were, and thou gavest them me. He was conſtituted a Head to them, and they became his Members. And he came under Obligation to preſerve them ſafe, and to conduct them to that State of Dignity and Happineſs, which the Father, as the Effect of his infinite Love, deſigned them, unto the Enjoyment of. For which reaſon our bleſſed Lord ſays: *This is the Father's Will which hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing; but ſhould raiſe it up, at the laſt Day.*

6. A glorious Reward was promiſed unto him, for the important Services, which he undertook to perform. All the Glory that he poſſeſſes, as Mediator, was then granted to him, on Condition of his Obedience, Sufferings and Death. And, therefore, he ſpeaks of his having this Glory before the World was: *With the Glory which I had with thee before the World was.* He had it, in Promiſe and Grant, when he engaged to fulfil the Father's Pleaſure, concerning the Redemption of his People.

Thus, I think it appears very clearly, that Chriſt the eternal Son of God, as he was to become Incarnate, entered into Covenant with the Father, and undertook to accompliſh the Whole of his Will, relating to the Recovery of thoſe unto whom he was appointed a Head, in ſuch a Way, as magnifies the Law, and is becoming all the divine Perfections: And, that all that Glory, which he hath Poſſeſſion of, was given to him by Promiſe, in the Character of Mediator, tho' neither conſtituent Part of his

his humane Nature, his Soul, or his Body, then subsisted.

VI. And lastly: The Constitution of Christ Mediator, was *from Everlasting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was.*

These Phrases express either a measurable Duration, or an immeasurable one. It is I think allowed by all, that a Duration is intended, which was before the Existence of the World. That Duration either had Beginning, or it had not. If it commenced, and had Beginning, it was properly *Time*, and *not Eternity*. Time and Eternity differ, as *finite* and *infinite* differ. Time is finite, and Eternity is infinite. And it is impossible, that there should be a Medium between Eternity and Time: As there cannot be a Mean between infinite, and finite. Whatever is, must be either infinite or finite, unlimited, or limited. And, consequently, this Duration, if it began, it was Time, it could not be Eternity. It was measurable, and certainly had a Limit, at which we must necessarily stop, in our Conceptions about it; if not, it was Eternity: Or a Duration infinite. To say, that it was not measured by the regular Motion of Body, as Time with us, is measured by the Course of the Sun, will not prove it immeasurable, nor can that be intended; because then it must be granted, that it was Eternity, which it is not allowed to be, by those unto whom I have Reference; but it is said to be an AFTER DATE of Eternity, by the *learned* Author before mentioned, which had Beginning,

ning, or Commencement, which if it had, it was *properly Time*, and it must differ from Eternity, as that which is finite differs, from that which is infinite. And what is to be proved by all this? No other Thing, than, that God's Decrees are *later* than his Existence, and how much later he could not determine, because *neither the Thing speaks, nor the Word declares it*. The Being of God was eternal, or had no Beginning, but all his Decrees, if this is true, were *temporary*, or had Beginning. And therefore, for an infinite Duration, which must have been, before this *After Date*, or *Beginning*, could take Place, God was without any Conceptions and Thoughts of his Works. That is to say, *once God had no Love to Christ as Mediator, no Conceptions concerning him. Once he had no Love to the Church, nor Thoughts about her. Once he was without infinite Thought and Consciousness, and consequently he once was not God.* For, a Being without infinite Thought and Consciousness can't be God. As I have before said.

The other Writer mentioned above, in order to support his Notion of the Existence of the Soul of Christ before the Creation of the World, interprets these Phrases, in the same Manner, in this, copying after that *learned* Author, as some others also do, to defend a Notion, which is *absolutely useless*, that hath not the least Connection with, Dependence upon, nor is inferible from any Branch whatever, of evangelical Truth. But is wholly dissonant to the Scripture, and evers the eternal Covenant of Grace,

Grace, wherein the Salvation of God's Elect was everlastingly provided for and secur'd.

If there was a Duration before the Production of the World, which had Commencement, why may there not be a Duration, after the Dissolution of it, which will have an End? And if the former is called everlasting, tho' it had Beginning, why may not the latter be so called, tho it should have an End? As some imagine it will; but both are *foolish Dreams* and *alike untrue*.

Farther, if this Liberty may be taken in interpreting the Scripture, I am sure, it will be impossible to prove from thence, the Eternity of God himself; for his eternal Existence is not expressed in stronger Language, than is used about his Decrees, and the Designation of Christ unto the mediatorial Office, in respect to that Duration, wherein the divine Decrees were formed, and Christ was *set up*, or constituted Mediator. And such Liberty can be taken, only to maintain that which is directly absurd, and repugnant unto some of the most glorious Truths of the Gospel, *viz.* Christ's eternal Relation to the Church of God, and his eternal Engagements in her Favour, in the Covenant of Grace.

These Phrases, *from Everlasting*, *from the Beginning*, *or ever the Earth was*, so fully express Eternity, or that immeasurable Duration which was before Creation, that I much scruple whether any, which do more strongly express it in Scripture, can be produced. *So operose was* Solomon, *in setting forth the Eternity of Wisdom, lest it should be thought that he spake of created Wisdom*,

Wiſdom, as the learned *Gejerus* obſerves. When God repreſents unto us his eternal Exiſtence, it is thus: *Yea, before the Day was, I am he* (*). And when he aſſerts the Eternity of his Decrees, it is thus: *Calling the Generations* (מרוֹר) *from or before the Beginning* (†). And the plain Senſe of the Phraſes here uſed, is, Duration before the Commencement of Time, or the Exiſtence of any Thing created. Chriſt was ſet up *before the World or Time, before the Beginning, and before the Earth exiſted* (‡). I humbly hope that the *proper* Eternity of the divine Decrees, and the *proper* Eternity of the mediatorial Office of Chriſt, are eſtabliſhed beyond ſober and modeſt Objection; which were the important Ends that I had in View, in this Diſcourſe. I ſhall cloſe it with making three Obſervations.

Firſt Obſervation. The Evangelical Scheme is *wholly new*; It is a Syſtem of Truths, which Reaſon, in its higheſt Perfection, could not poſſibly have acquired any Knowledge of. There are three Principles, from which we derive all our Ideas, *viz.* Senſation, Reflection and Abſtraction; by neither of which we could even have obtained the leaſt Acquaintance with the *deep Things of God*. And this is, I humbly apprehend, the Meaning of the Apoſtle in theſe Words: *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man, the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* The

(*) Iſh. xliii. 13. (†) Chap. xli. 4.

(‡) *Ante* Seculum uncta ſui, *ante* Principium, *ante* Primordia Terræ; So *Noldius* renders the Words. Vid. Concord. Partic. in D.

The Eye hath seen much, and the Ear hath heard much: A very considerable Part of our Ideas, are gained by Sight and Hearing; which includes in it, the whole of the Instruction that we receive from others, relating to the Nature of Things. But it was not possible that by these Means we should ever have discovered any Evangelical Truths: Sensation could not enable us to make such important Discoveries; neither could Reflection on those Ideas gained by Sensation, help us in this Matter: Nor could Abstraction, which is a Separation of our Ideas, by which Act of the Mind a new Kind of Ideas are obtained, which are purely intellectual, assist us in this Thing. The Reason hereof is clear. The Truths of the Gospel have neither Connection with, nor Dependence upon, any Branch of Truth, which a finite Understanding is capable of discovering.

If we had a complete Knowledge of the *first* Covenant, in the whole Compass of its Principles, Precepts, Promises and Threatenings, we then should be absolutely unable to make the least Discovery of the Doctrine of the second Covenant; for that is entirely new, and altogether distinct in its Nature, from the first Covenant. And it being so, none of its Truths come within the Verge, even of unimpaired and perfect Reason; which fully proves the absolute Impossibility, of the human Mind gaining the Knowledge of its Truths, by any Acts it is able to put forth. Angels themselves could never have known any Thing at all of Evangelical Mysteries, without *supernatural* Revelation.

lation. Truths they are, which were *hid in God, who created all Things by Jesus Christ.*

To imagine, as some have imagined, that the second Covenant is founded on Truths contained in the first; or upon those natural Notions, which we have as Men, of the moral Perfections of God; is effectually to destroy both Covenants. For, that Imagination, is inconsistent with the Nature of the Covenant of Works, and with the Nature of the Covenant of Grace. The mediatorial Scheme, hath no Relation unto, nor Agreement, in its Nature with the Doctrine of the first Covenant; tho' it is calculated to secure the highest Honour to it, by the Obedience and Death of Christ.

Second Observation. Hence we learn what will be the noble Employ of the saints in the heavenly State: viz. The Contemplation and Adoration of the Divine Perfections, as displayed in the astonishing Affair of their Recovery and Salvation. Some seem to please themselves with the Thoughts of this, that in Heaven they shall become perfect Philosophers, and have a more extensive Knowledge of Things created, than *Adam* had in Paradise: That they shall be able to unravel Nature in her secret Causes, numerous Operations, and multiplied various Effects. I can find nothing in Scripture, which favours this tickling Imagination. This I know, that the Souls of the Saints, will be eternally entertained, with what is infinitely more *noble, sublime* and *grand*, than any Thing which Nature can possibly suggest to

the Mind. I am clearly of the Opinion of an eminent Divine in this Matter, who ſpeaks thus: *Is it not much to be lamented that many Chriſtians content themſelves with a very* ſuperficial *Knowledge of theſe Things?* (i. e. Goſpel Truths) *How are the Studies, the Abilities, the Time and Diligence of many excellent Perſons, engaged in, and laid out about the Works of Nature, and the Effects of Divine Wiſdom and Power in them, by whom any Endeavour to enquire into this glorious Myſtery* (of Chriſt's Perſon) *is neglected, if not deſpiſed! Alas, the Light of Divine Wiſdom, in the greateſt Works of Nature, holds not the Proportion of the meaneſt Star unto the Sun in its full Strength; unto that Glory of it which ſhines in this Myſtery of God manifeſt in the Fleſh, and the Work accompliſhed thereby. A little Time ſhall put an End unto the Subject of their Enquiries, with all the Concernment of God and Man in them for ever.* [a] *This alone is that which* fills up Eternity, *and which altho' it be now with ſome as nothing, yet will ſhortly be* All. The conſtant Contemplation on theſe *glorious* and *ſublime Myſteries*, fills the Minds of the Bleſſed with the higheſt Complacency and Delight, and will maintain in them a holy Adoration of God unto Eternity.

Third Obſervation. If we approve of theſe Things, and they are delightful unto us, as the Glory of God ſhines forth in them; it is an Evidence in itſelf, whether we allow it or not in our own Favour, that we are the happy Subjects of a gracious Illumination from God. For, ſuch

[a] Dr. *Owen* of the Perſon of Chriſt, p. 290, 291.

ſuch is the Nature of theſe Heavenly Myſteries, that the *carnal* Mind hath not, nor can have any Pleaſure in them. That *receives* them not, they are *Fooliſhneſs* unto it, whatever is pretended to the contrary; it cannot *know* them, becauſe they are *ſpiritually diſcerned*. And, therefore, if the Things themſelves are agreeable to us, if they are our *chief Joy*, and that State is moſt deſirable to us; wherein we ſhall perfectly know them, and be for ever converſant about them, we are certainly *meet* for the Enjoyment of it.

Our preſent Satisfaction and Complacency in theſe ſublime Truths, as they are glorifying unto God in all his infinite Perfections, is a full Evidence of our future Happineſs in the Contemplation of them, in the World of Light and Glory above. For, our Approbation of Heavenly Things is a clear Proof, That *God, who commanded the Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs, hath ſhined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge of his Glory, in the Face* (or Perſon) *of Jeſus* Chriſt.

FINIS.

such is the Nature of these Heavenly Mysteries, that the carnal Mind hath not, nor can have any Pleasure in them. That rejects them not, they are Foolishness unto it, whatever is pretended to the contrary; it cannot know them, because they are Spiritually discerned. And, therefore, if the Things themselves are agreeable to us, if they are our chief Joy, and that State is most desirable to us; wherein we shall perfectly know them, and be for ever conversant about them, we are certainly meet for the Enjoyment of it.

Our present Satisfaction and Complacency in these sublime Truths, as they are glorifying unto God in all his infinite Perfections, is a full Evidence of our future Happiness in the Contemplation of them, in the World of Light and Glory above. For, our Approbation of Heavenly Things is a clear Proof, That God, who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our Hearts to give the Light of the Knowledge of his Glory, in the Face (or Person) of Jesus Christ.

FINIS.